



11th Commandment

We have learnt to be politically correct rather than exposing the people to the truth.

Christianity may look offensive.

Gospel may look offensive to people.

What we can't accept is tolerating evil attack against the Truth.

Ephesians 6:10-20, *Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. ¹¹ Put on the whole armour of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. ¹² For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. ¹³ Therefore take up the whole armour of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.*

¹⁴ Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness, ¹⁵ and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; ¹⁶ above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one. ¹⁷ And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God; ¹⁸ praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints— ¹⁹ and for me, that utterance may be given to me, that I may open my mouth boldly to make known the mystery of the gospel, ²⁰ for which I am an ambassador in chains; that in it I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.

Jude 1:1-4, *Jude, a bondservant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, To those who are called, sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ: ² Mercy, peace, and love be multiplied to you. ³ Beloved, while I was very diligent to write to you concerning our common salvation, I found it necessary to write to you exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints. ⁴ For certain men have crept in unnoticed, who long ago were marked out for this condemnation, ungodly men, who turn the grace of our God into lewdness and deny the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ.*

2 Corinthians 10:1-6, *Now I, Paul, myself am pleading with you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ—who in presence am lowly among you, but being absent am bold toward you. ² But I beg you that when I am present I may not be bold with that confidence by which I intend to be bold against some, who think of us as if we walked according to the flesh. ³ For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh. ⁴ For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal*

but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, ⁵ casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ, ⁶ and being ready to punish all disobedience when your obedience is fulfilled.

Paul begins this final section of this letter, the last four chapters, chapters 10-13. He begins by introducing a warfare motif.

Paul is talking here about battle.

When Paul came to the end of his life, he wrote to his spiritual son.

2 Timothy 4:7, *I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.*

Paul looked back over his life and realized that it was a war. It had been an unrelenting battle. He even asked his son to be a good soldier.

2 Timothy 2:3-4, *You therefore must endure hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. ⁴ No one engaged in warfare entangles himself with the affairs of this life, that he may please him who enlisted him as a soldier.*

Be a good soldier of Christ Jesus, one who had suffered hardship in the battle and was fighting loyally to please the one who had enlisted him to be a soldier, his Lord. He battled all the way through his life. From the beginning of his conversion to the very end, it was a war. He never battled for personal honour.

Paul never battled for personal achievement or glory or fame or comfort. He always fought for the truth, for the gospel, and for the Lord.

All through his ministry, there were hostile opposers to Paul. They came at him with slander, false accusation, persecution, threats, jealousy, envy, and murder plots.

His apostolic authority was challenged.

His personal integrity was challenged.

His message was constantly challenged by those who hated and resisted the truth of the gospel.

Paul was battling to protect the truth, and the gospel from assaults. Battling also to advance it, to conquer the satanic realm of error. He battled to preserve the honour and advance the glory of his commander in chief, the Lord Jesus Christ.

He battled then for the honour of Christ, and for the preservation of the Word of God. He battled for the security and strength of the church.

He battled against demons.

He battled against men.

He battled against false teachers.

He battled against philosophies and false religions.

His body was loaded with scars from the battle, whip marks, marks all over his back from the rods with which he was beaten, chain marks on his ankles and legs, the marks of stones that attempted to crush out his life.

But all in all, in all the warfare that the apostle endured and all the riots from which he escaped with his life, nothing was more ongoing and unrelenting than the warfare waged for the preservation of the Corinthian church.

Little did he know when he launched his ministry in Corinth over those first twenty months or so that he would have to engage in a battle that went on for years just to preserve the truth in that place.

Paul had founded the church at Corinth. He spent about twenty months and preached the gospel and led many to Christ, strengthened, and built up the church.

After that period, he left and word came to him that the church was engaged in sin, and he wrote a letter to them. We don't have that letter.

Paul followed it up by a second letter, which we call 1 Corinthians, and he wrote that letter listed and endeavoured to correct a long list of iniquities. 1 Corinthians is an embarrassment of correctives to a church engaging in sins on many different levels.

After they received the 1 Corinthian letter, and no doubt it had some corrective effect upon them. Word came to the apostle Paul even more serious problem that was the arrival of false teachers who were assaulting Paul and assaulting the gospel.

They wanted to teach damning heresy. In order to accomplish that, they had to destroy Paul's reputation because the people trusted and believed in him. So, they started a smear campaign against Paul.

Undermining his

- authority,
- character,
- credibility, and
- integrity.

They made the church into victims who were now ready to listen to people teaching damnable lies. The people lost trust in Paul.

Word came to Paul about this, and he had to react. He wrote to them a letter which is referred to in 2 Corinthians, a letter between 1 Corinthians and 2 Corinthians, which is called the severe letter, a very severe attack on them for following the false teachers.

2 Corinthians 2:4, *For out of much affliction and anguish of heart I wrote to you, with many tears, not that you should be grieved, but that you might know the love which I have so abundantly for you.*

It was a letter written with many tears. It was a letter written out of anguish of heart that they had betrayed him. Rebellion and turned against him and went after false teaching.

That was tragic to him because it disconnected them from the truth of God coming through him. It disconnected them from the sanctifying effect of that church and from having any kind of powerful witness to the lost around them.

The severe letter was taken to them by Titus.

Titus confronted this issue, gave them the severe letter, and wonderfully the congregation in general repented of their rebellion. Corinth church responded and their relationship to Paul was restored.

They reaffirmed Paul's authority. They reaffirmed their devotion, their love to him, their submission to him as the apostle of Jesus Christ. The severe letter had its desired effect, along with Titus. What Paul had hoped for was accomplished.

This is good news to Paul because when the severe letter was being taken to them, he was in depression, sorrow, anguish, and pain.

Which Paul is chronicled particularly in chapter 7 of this letter.

He was literally depressed until Titus came back and reported about their repentance.

Why did he write 2 Corinthians?

Paul writes 2 Corinthians because he knows something that any good soldier, leader knows and that is that though a rebellion has been for the moment ended, leftovers of it can be found in many places.

He knew that there were still some glowing embers from the fire of accusation against him. They were ready to be fanned into flame at the first opportunity. He knew there were false teachers still there.

Still hiding in the congregation were some rebels who were ready to again start up the revolution. He also knew what anybody knows who's ever dealt with slander difficult to clear your name.

Once it goes to the wind, it's almost impossible to get it all back. They had been spread and far and wide through a conspiracy that could not be undone easily or quickly.

There still were false teachers in the church. There still were those who believed them. They had just been pressed underground by the general repentance of the congregation. There were rebels then waiting for the first opportunity to assert themselves.

In the meantime, they would war some guerrilla warfare behind the scenes, some terrorist activity, picking their spots here and there to repeat their lies in appropriate times and places.

The poison that was underground would no doubt seep to the surface occasionally. Furthermore, this had gone far and wide and many people were asking the good believers at Corinth to explain all of this. They needed to be armed with as much information about the integrity, credibility, and authority of Paul.

Now, in the final section, he directs his words at those remaining rebels, that recalcitrant minority still entrenched there.

The minority apart from the majority who repented are the direct objects of what he says in chapters 10-13.

Earlier in the epistle, he said he was so sad and broken hearted. Though he wanted to come and visit, he was not going to do it because he didn't want any more sorrow than he already had. So, he didn't have the heart to come back until now.

Since Titus has come back and reported their repentance and restoration and they are now ready to affirm his authority, integrity and embrace him as the apostle of Jesus Christ, he is going to come back.

He is going to come back for a third time. But chapters 10 to 13 are a warning to those people still holding onto those rebellious attitudes that when he gets there, if they're still like that, it's going to be all-out war. When he comes back, he's coming back with his guns blazing.

- He is coming back with weapons of warfare that are divinely powerful to the pulling down of strongholds.
- He is coming back to punish all disobedience.
- He is coming back to destroy everything lifted up against the knowledge of God.

The first section, chapters 1 to 7 focused on the restored relationship between him and the church. The first seven chapters are gracious, the tone of them is somewhat gentle. There's a certain kind of sweetness about those first seven chapters as he talks about the relationship that he has in general with the church members. How difficult their rebellion had been, how crushed and heartbroken he was, and how grateful that it had ended, and love had been restored.

Chapters 8 and 9, having had a restored relationship, he can now take an offering. Simple principle - don't try to take an offering from your enemies, you won't get very much.

The final section, and he says I am coming now for the third time to deal strongly with any remaining hostility to the truth.

He moves then from the calm and tender pleadings of chapters 1 through 9, geared to all the Corinthians, to strong and stern and authoritative words in this final section.

It is directed at the remaining hostility and how he will deal with those who host that hostility in their hearts. The issue with the church in general having been settled, he now goes after the pockets of enemy territory and it's a search and discover and destroy mission that he has in mind.

Titus will take this letter to them, and it will be about two and a half months after they get this letter that he will come for his third visit.

Paul is giving them a couple of months to deal with this issue and for the people who are still disloyal to repent so that when he comes there, they don't face this great soldier.

He is coming to fight if fighting is necessary. Exactly how he opens the whole section, talking about warfare, weapons, fortresses and bringing them down. It is a warfare perspective. This is his battle plan.

If he has to fight, he will fight!

The Corinthians must decide that.

1 Corinthians 4:21, *"What do you desire? Shall I come to you with a rod or with a spirit of gentleness?"*

Paul presenting himself in his soldier uniform, in his soldier mentality, in his warrior garb. He gives us four traits of a soldier, four traits of a warrior who will win the spiritual war, an effective soldier.